VISIT…

Usborne Activities

What shall I grow?

What shall I grow?

Ray Gibson

Designed by Amanda Barlow

Edited by Fiona Watt

Illustrated by Kim Lane

Photographs by Howard Allman

Series Editor: Jenny Tyler

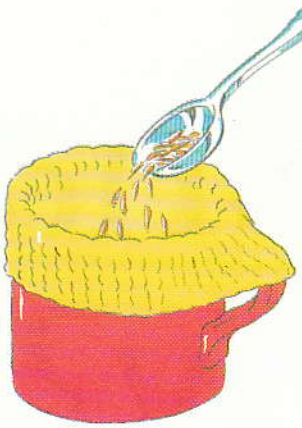
Contents

Green-haired creatures	2	Roots and shoots	18
A giant sunflower	4	Leafy stems	20
A tiny garden	6	Bean sprouts to eat	22
Cress shapes	8	Tasty tomatoes	23
Tiny islands in the sea	10	A leaf into a plant	24
A spiky plant	11	Herbs on your windowsill	26
Crocuses in a silver pot	12	A sweet-smelling flower	28
Potatoes in a bucket	14	An ivy tower	30
Pots of pansies	16	A moss garden	32

With thanks to John Russell

Green-haired creatures

1. Wet an old sock and put it into a mug. Turn the top over the rim.

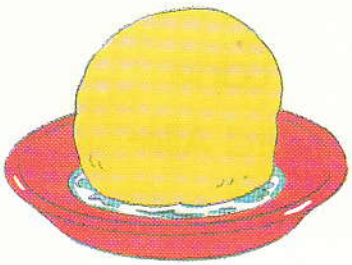


2. Use a spoon to spread lots of grass seeds all over the bottom.

3. Use an old spoon to fill the mug with potting compost.

4. Wrap an elastic band tightly around the sock. Chop off the top.

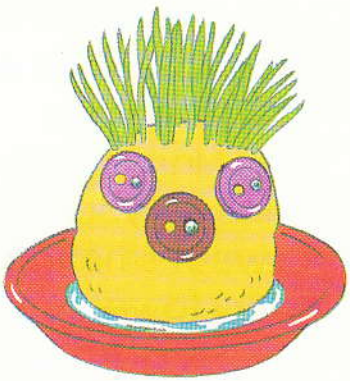
5. Pour water onto the top of the sock. Lift it up and let it drip.



6. Turn it upside down. Put it on a saucer and pour water around.

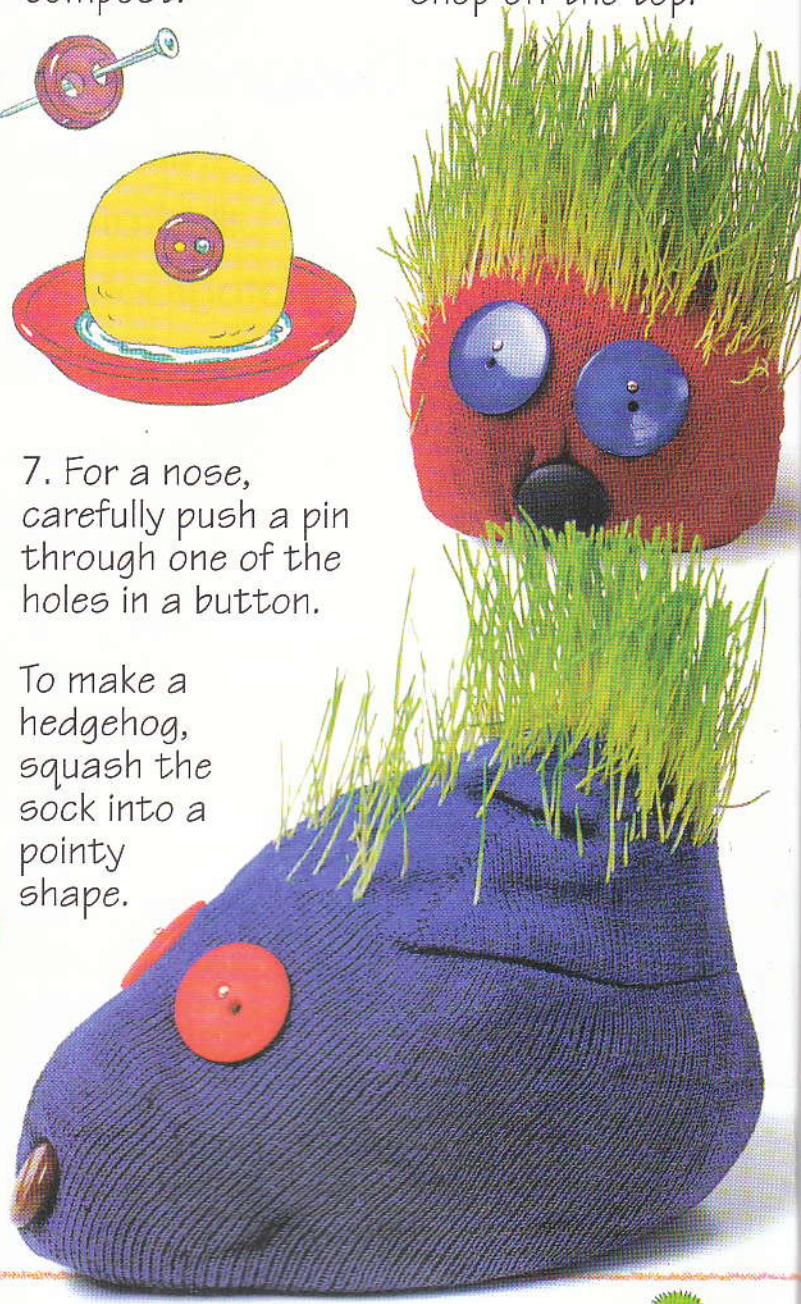
7. For a nose, carefully push a pin through one of the holes in a button.

8. For eyes, push in some more pins with buttons near the nose.



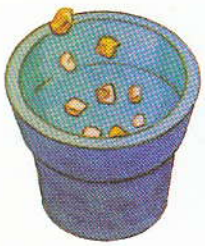
9. Put your creature into a warm, light room. Make sure you keep the top wet.

To make a hedgehog, squash the sock into a pointy shape.



You can cut the 'hair' short and let it grow again.

A giant sunflower

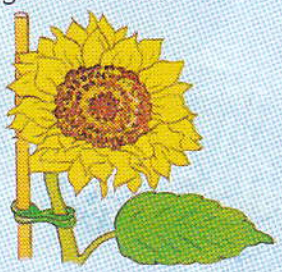


1. You need to buy a packet of sunflower seeds. Put stones into the bottom of a small pot.

2. Fill the pot with potting compost. Press in two seeds. Leave a gap between them.

3. Water your pot. Put it outside in a light place. Water it often to stop it from drying out.

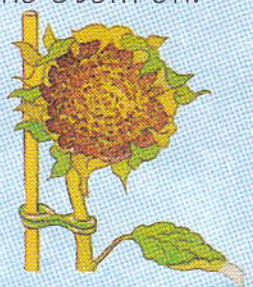
4. Two seedlings should grow. Pull out the smaller one so that the other one grows well.



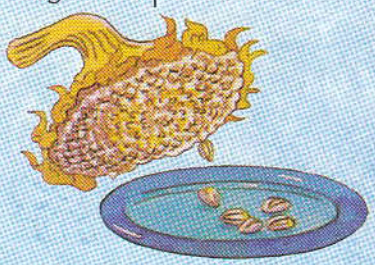
5. When the plant is about as high as your hand, get help to plant it in a bigger pot.

6. Water your plant and leave in a light sunny spot, which is out of the wind.

Look on the seed packet to see how tall your flower might grow.



7. When your plant is as high as your knee, push a cane into the compost. Tie the stem on.



8. As the plant grows taller, carefully tie its stem to the cane higher up.

9. When the petals fall from the flower, leave the seeds on the plant to grow and ripen.

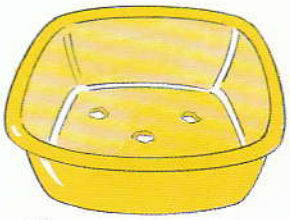
10. Shake out a few seeds from the head to plant next year. Leave the rest for the birds to eat.

Sunflowers have huge flowers and can grow very tall.

Plant your seeds in the spring.

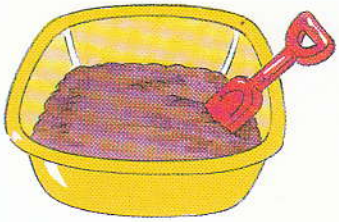
Your plants will grow flowers in summer.

A tiny garden

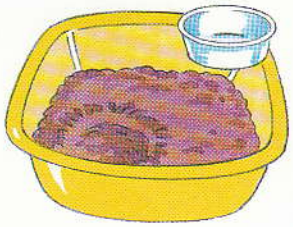


1. Get someone to help you to make holes in the bottom of an old plastic washing-up bowl.

2. Cover the bottom of the bowl with small pebbles or pieces of broken pots.

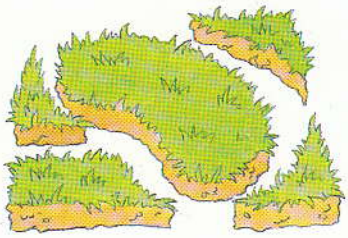


3. Use a small spade to fill the bowl almost to the top with potting compost.



4. For a pond, make a hole in the compost. Put a shallow plastic carton into it.

5. Put small pebbles into the bottom of the carton. Fill it with water.



6. Cut a lawn from a piece of turf. Put it beside the pond and water it well.

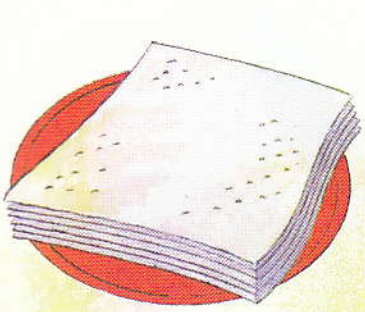
7. Dig small holes and plant a mixture of small plants around your lawn and pond.

8. Put some plastic dolls' house furniture onto the lawn. Add a tiny cat or dog too.

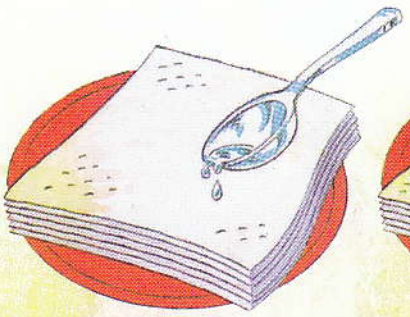
Use small plants such as pansies, primula, ivy, trailing lobelia and alyssum.

Plant this at any time.

Cress shapes

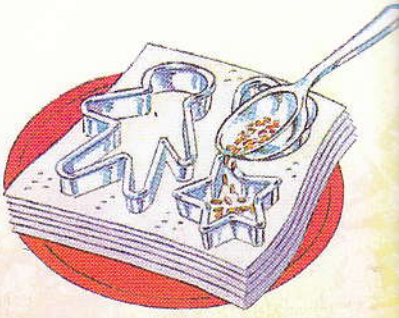


1. Tear off ten kitchen towels. Lay them on a large flat plate onto a small plastic tray.

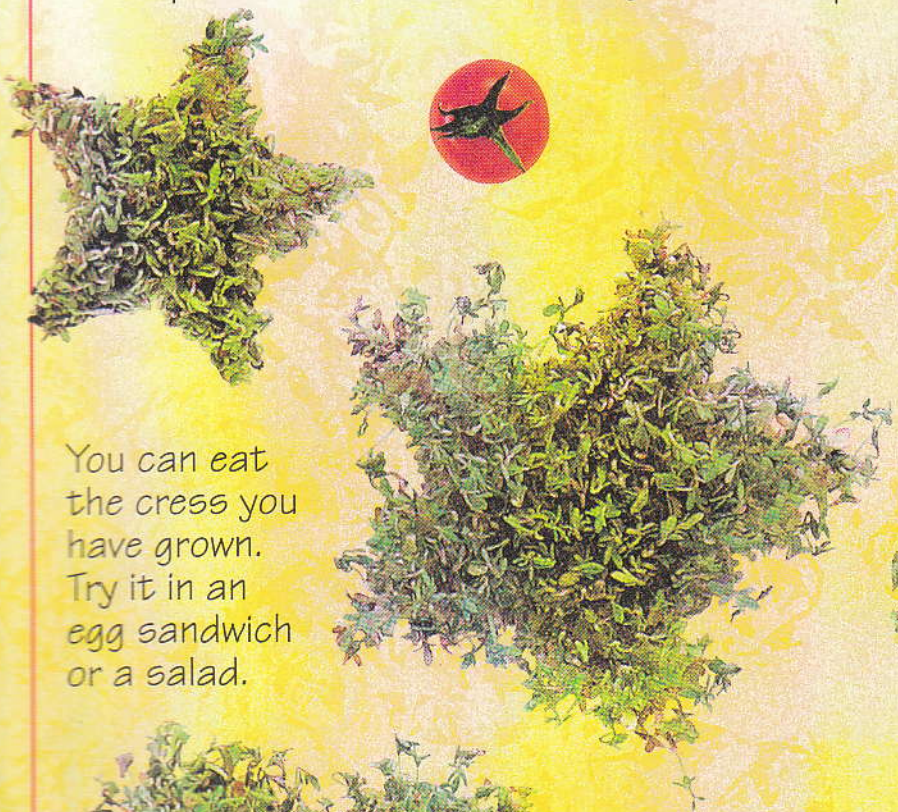


2. Use a spoon to put water onto the paper towels. Add water until they are soaking.

3. Lay some cookie cutters onto the towels with their sharp edges pointing down.

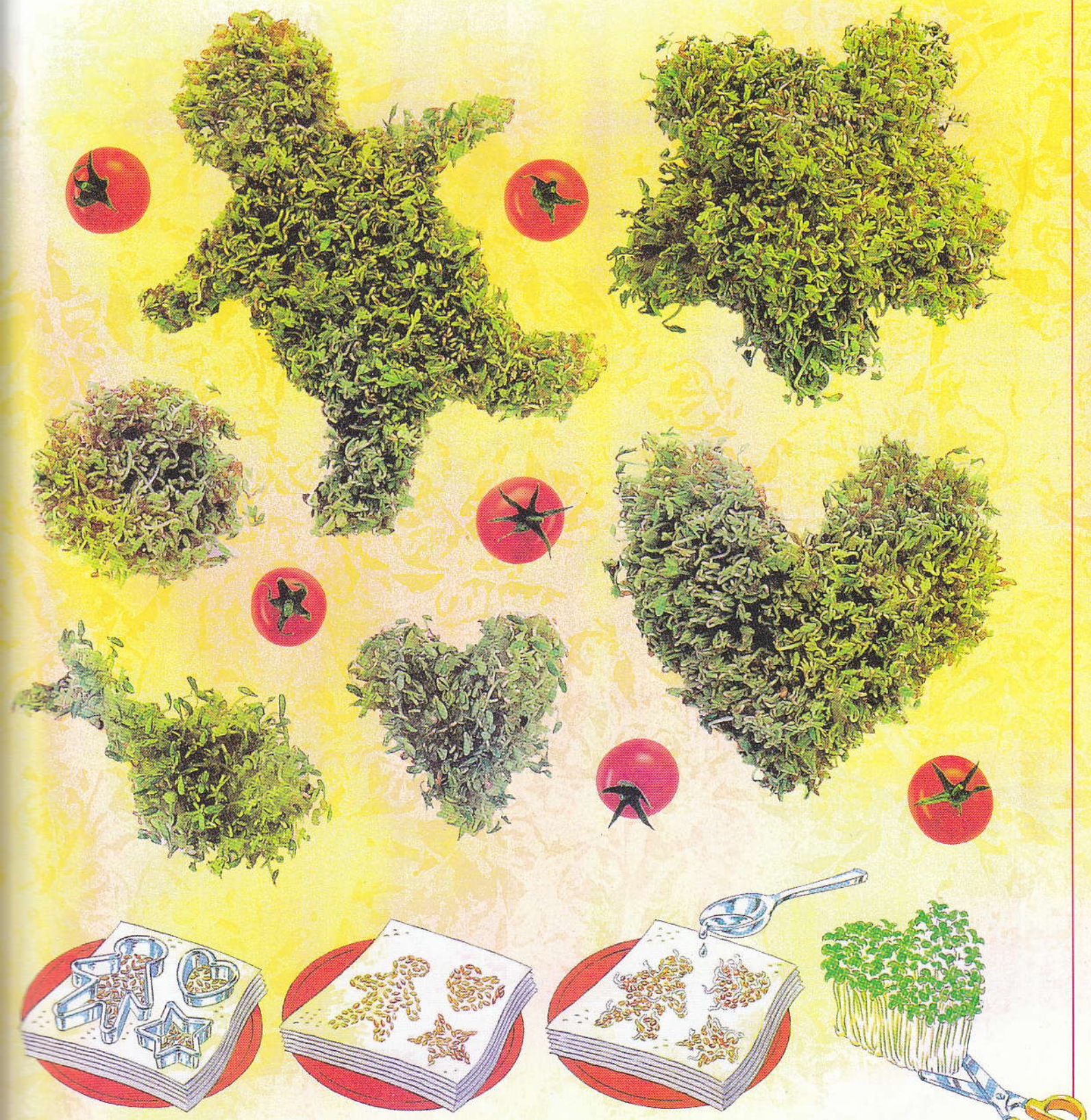


4. Use a teaspoon to sprinkle lots of cress seeds into each shape. Do this carefully.



You can eat the cress you have grown. Try it in an egg sandwich or a salad.

You can grow these at any time. They will grow in four to five days.



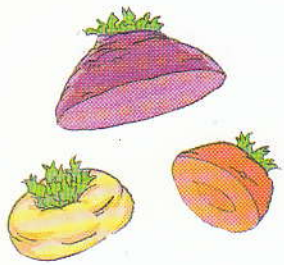
5. Spread the seeds all over each shape with your fingers. Hold the cutter as you do it.

6. Lift the cutters off the towel leaving the seed shapes. Put them in a light place.

7. Use a spoon to water around the seeds every day. Don't put water on the seeds.

8. When the cress is as long as your little finger, cut it off so you can eat it.

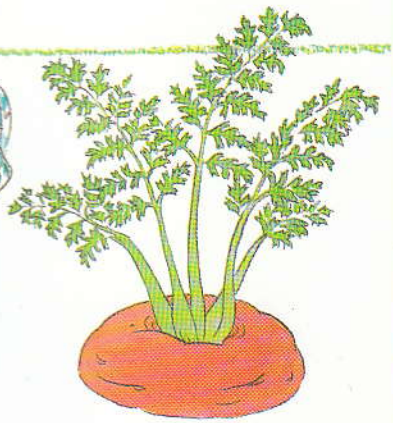
Tiny islands in the sea



1. Cut the top off some vegetables which have sprouted a little. Cut them as thick as this.

2. Put a little cold water into a shallow dish. Spread the vegetable tops over the bottom.

3. Carefully pour in a little more water around the vegetable tops but don't cover them.



4. Put the dish on a windowsill. Add a little water each day. The shoots will grow in a few days.

Use vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, turnips and beetroot.

Your shoots should grow to look like tall trees on islands.

You can grow these at any time.

A spiky plant

1. Cut the top off a pineapple so that the yellow part of it is as thick as this.

2. Lay it on its side on a plate. Leave it on a windowsill for two days so that it dries out a little.

3. Fill a pot with compost. Put the pineapple top on top. Press more compost around.

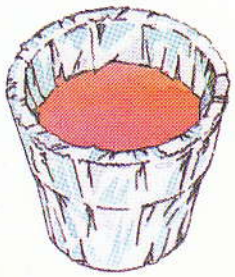
4. Water it and leave it in a warm place. New leaves will grow in the middle.

Water your pineapple plant often.

Grow when you can buy a ripe pineapple.

Crocuses in a silver pot

1. Turn a pot upside down and lay some kitchen foil over it. Make a hole in the top of the foil.



2. Turn the pot over. Press the edges of the foil inside the top of the pot.

3. Use a spoon to put potting compost into the pot. Fill it about halfway up.

4. Put some crocus corms (which look like bulbs) into the pot with their pointed ends up.

5. Fill the pot almost to the top with more compost. Water it so that it is damp.

6. Put the pot into a cool, dark place. Look at it once a week. Water it if it feels dry.

7. When the shoots are as long as your thumb put the pot into a light, cool place. Keep it damp.

8. When the shoots grow taller, put the pot in a light place. The flowers will come out.

Cut shapes from paper and glue them on the foil.

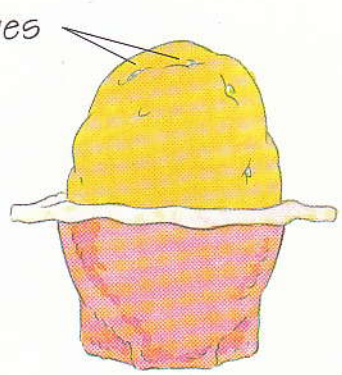
Plant in the autumn to bloom in the spring. They take10 to12 weeks to grow.

When the flowers die, cut the heads off. Plant the corms in your garden and they may flower again next year.

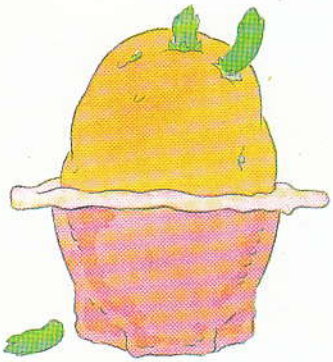
Stand your pot on a saucer to stop it marking surfaces.

Try planting miniature daffodil bulbs in the same way.

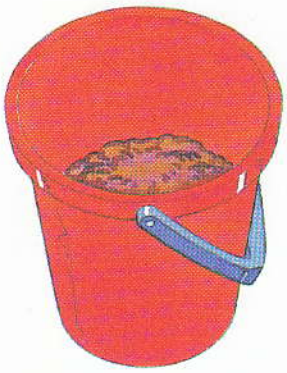
Potatoes in a bucket



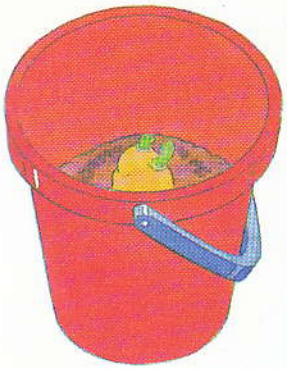
1. Put a potato into an eggbox, with its eyes at the top. Leave it for several weeks until it grows shoots.



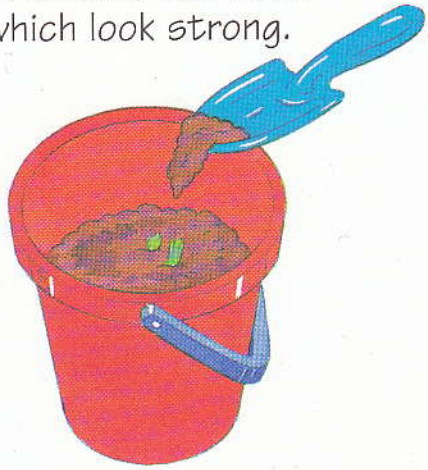
2. When the shoots are as long as this, rub off most of the shoots but leave two which look strong.



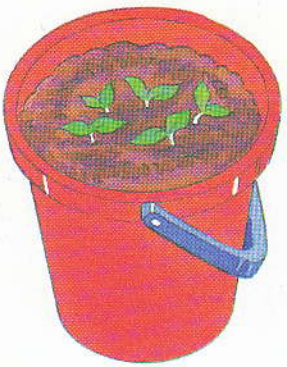
3. Make holes in the bottom of an old bucket. Cover the bottom with stones then add some potting compost.



4. Push the potato into the compost with the shoots pointing up. Cover it with compost. Leave it outside.

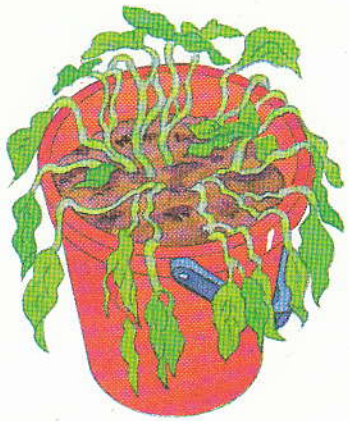


5. In about four weeks, you'll see some shoots. Cover them with compost and water your bucket.



6. Add more compost and water it every time the shoots appear. Do this until the bucket is full.

7. After a while, flowers will grow. Water your plant often. If a potato appears, cover it with some compost.

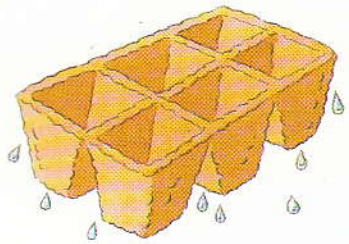


8. After four months the plant will die. Tip the compost out. See how many potatoes have grown.

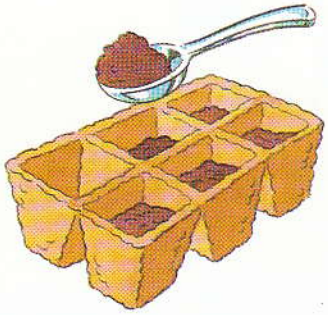
Don't forget to water your plant if the compost feels dry.

Keep your potatoes in a cool, dark place until you are ready to cook and eat them.

Pots of pansies



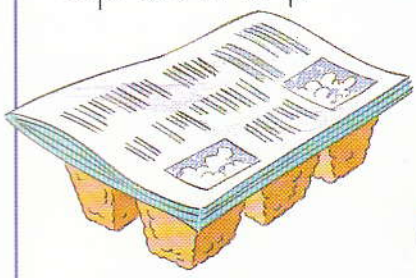
1. Rinse the bottom part of an eggbox under the tap. Let it drip.



2. Put some potting compost in the sections. Don't fill them to the top.

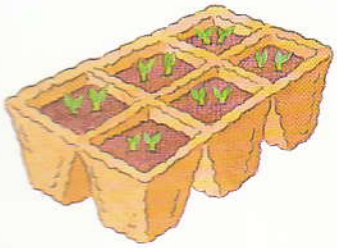
3. Put two pansy seeds into each section. Leave a gap between them.

4. Sprinkle some more compost on top of the seeds and press it down.



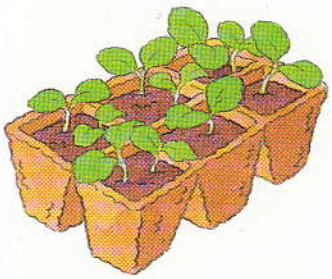
5. Cover the eggbox with a newspaper and leave it outside in a cool place.

6. Keep the seeds moist. After about two weeks, shoots will begin to show.



7. Take off the newspaper so that the shoots can get plenty of light.

For pansies which will flower in winter, plant in the late summer.



8. When they have grown two leaves, pull out the smaller shoot.

9. As your pansies grow, roots will grow through the sides of the eggbox.

10. Soak the eggbox and gently pull the sections apart.

11. Half-fill a pot with compost. Put one section into it. Add more compost.

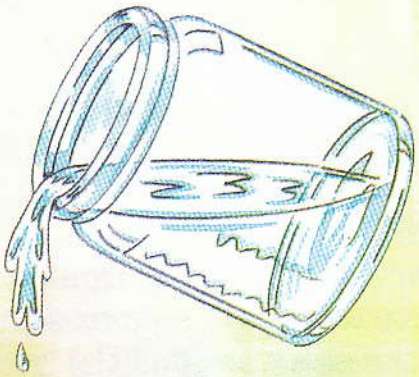
12. Put your pots outside on warm days, but bring them in at night.

You can plant your pansies straight into the garden if you like.

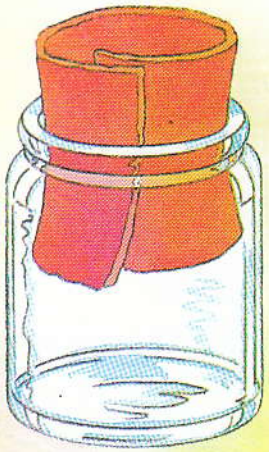
Paint your pots with acrylic paint if you like.

Roots and shoots

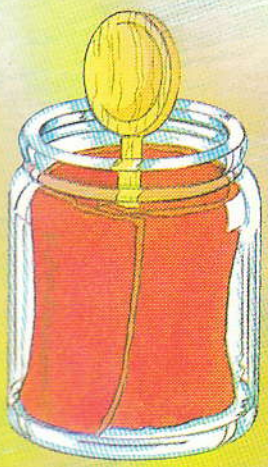
1. Soak a big jar and peel off its labels. Soak three broad bean seeds in a saucer.



2. Rinse the inside of the jar with cold water. Empty it out but don't dry it.



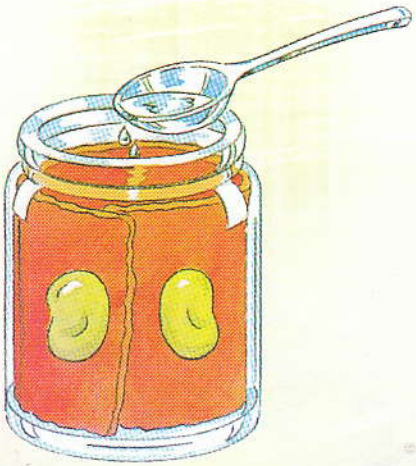
3. Fold a paper napkin in half. Curl it into a circle and slip it inside the jar.



4. Press the napkin against the side of the jar with the handle of a spoon.

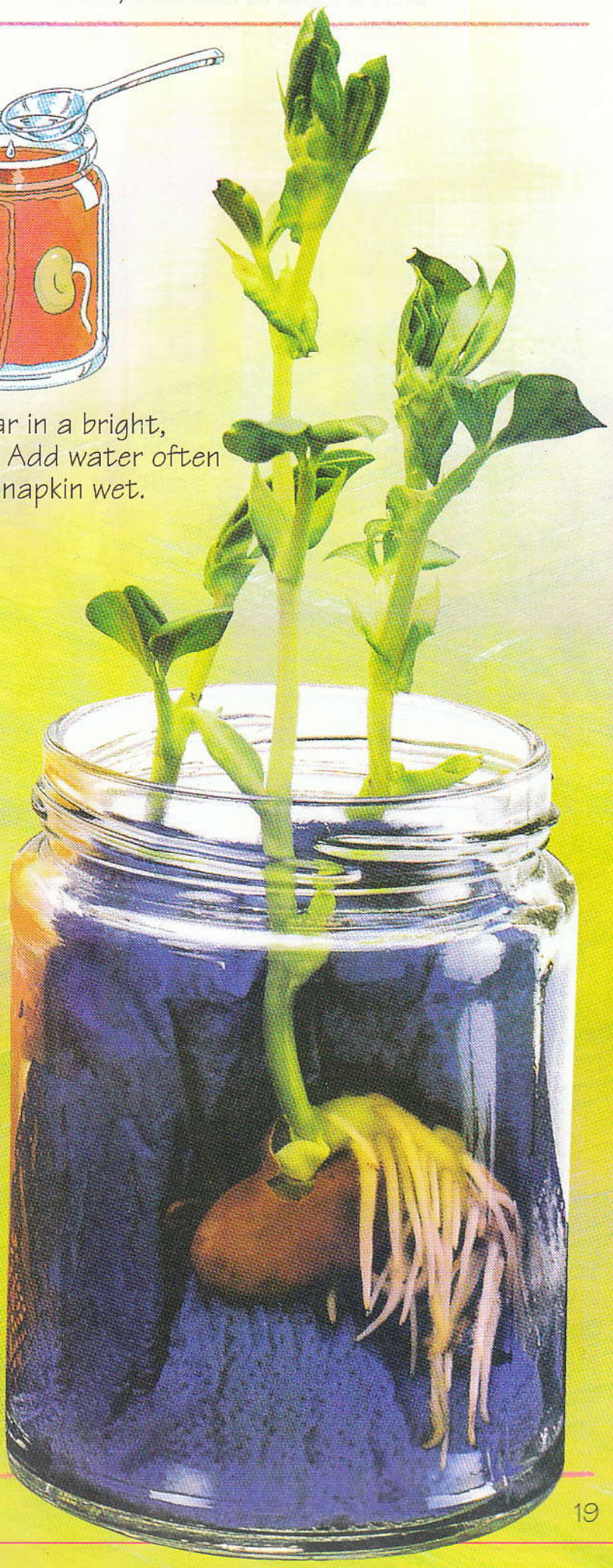
5. Peel back part of the napkin. Push a broad bean seed in against the jar.

You can grow these at any time. They take two to three weeks.

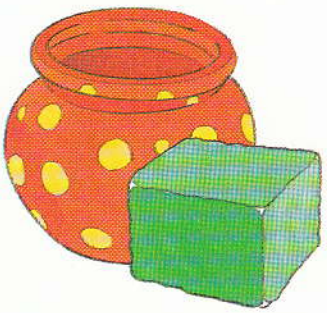


6. Add the other beans around the jar. Wet the napkin with lots of water.

7. Put the jar in a bright, warm place. Add water often to keep the napkin wet.



Leafy stems



1. You need a pot or a mug and some florist's foam (the kind used to arrange flowers in a vase).

2. Soak the foam in a bowl of water. Leave it in the water until bubbles stop coming to the surface.

3. Push the foam into your pot. Use scissors to trim it so that it is a little bit below the top of the pot.

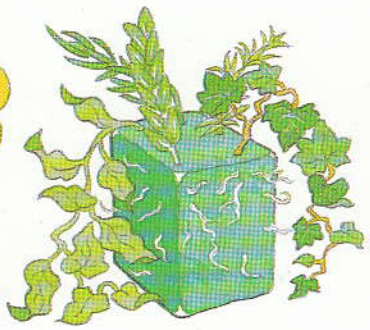
4. Ask if you can cut pieces from plants which have woody stems. Make them just longer than your hand.

5. The pieces you have cut are called cuttings. Snip a straight end just below a leaf of each cutting.

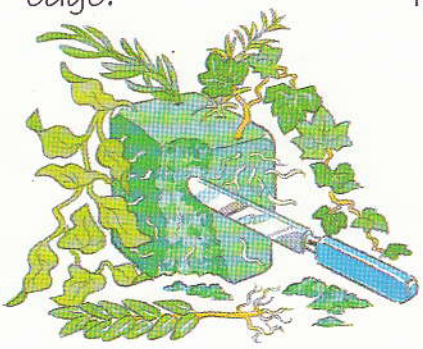
6. Pull off the bottom leaves. Push the end of the stem into the foam near to the edge.

7. Arrange your cuttings around the edge. Push them in well so that they do not fall out.

8. Put your pot on a windowsill but out of very bright sunshine. Water the foam often to keep it damp.



9. When new leaves grow, take the foam out of the pot and look and see if roots have grown.



10. Take a blunt knife and carefully cut the foam away from each cutting. Try not to damage their roots.

11. Plant each cutting in a pot full of potting compost. Water it and put it outside in a warm, light place.

Do this in autumn. They will grow in 6-8 weeks.

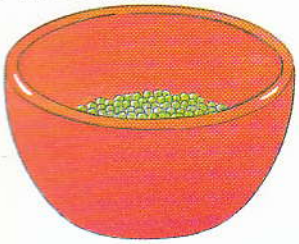
When you plant your cuttings, make sure that you don't forget to water them.

Cuttings in foam.

You can plant more than one ivy cutting in a pot.

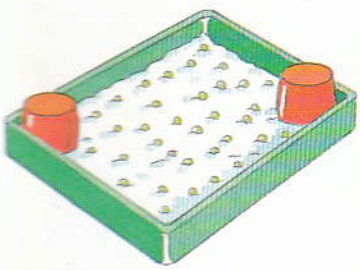
Bean sprouts to eat

1. Put two large spoons of mung beans into a sieve. Rinse them.



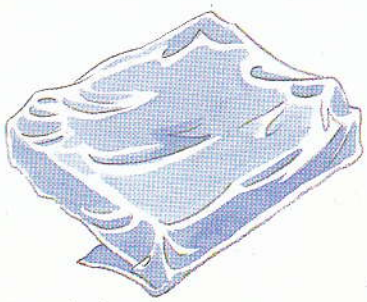
2. Soak the beans overnight in cold water. They will swell a little.

3. Lay some cotton wool roll in a plastic tray. Put water on it to make it damp.



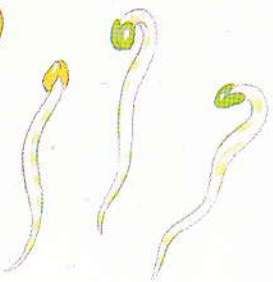
4. Put two egg cups upside down onto the tray. Spread the beans all over.

Eat your mung beans in a crunchy salad.



5. Slide the tray into a foodbag. Then put it in a black bin bag. Put it in a very warm, dark place.

6. Check each day that the cotton wool has not dried out. Water it to keep it damp.



7. When the shoots are this long, pull them off the cotton wool. Rinse them well.

Grow them at any time of year. They take 4-6 days.

Tasty tomatoes

1. You will need to buy two or three small tomato plants. Get them from a garden centre.

2. For each plant, put stones into a big plant pot. Cover them with potting compost.

3. Gently tip each plant out of its pot. Put one in each big pot. Try not to squash the leaves.

4. Add more compost to fill the pot. Gently press the compost around each plant.

5. Water your plants well and leave them outside in a sunny place. Bring them in if it is frosty.

6. Water your plants everyday, especially if it is hot and sunny. Flowers will grow.

7. As your plants grow taller, carefully push a cane into the pot and tie the stem to it.

8. After the flowers have died, little tomatoes will grow. Pick them when they turn red.

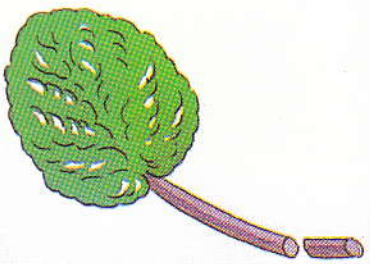
Plant them in spring and you'll get tomatoes in summer.

A leaf into a plant

1. Fill a small bottle with water. Don't fill it quite to the top so that you leave a small space.

2. Cut a paper square and fasten it over the top of the bottle with an elastic band.

3. Use scissors to cut off a leaf with its stalk from an African violet.



4. The leaf should be from near the outside and should look healthy.

Leave your plant in a light place, but not on a very sunny windowsill.

Grow at any time.

5. Hold the bottle. Make a hole in the middle of the paper with a very sharp pencil.

6. Push the stalk through the hole. Its end should go in the water. Add more water if you need to.

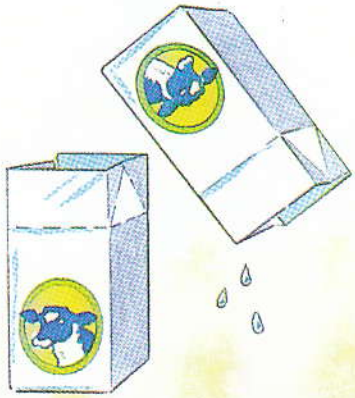
7. When tiny roots grow and new leaves appear it is ready to plant in a pot.

8. Make a hole in some compost. Put the plant in it and gently press around it. Water your plant.

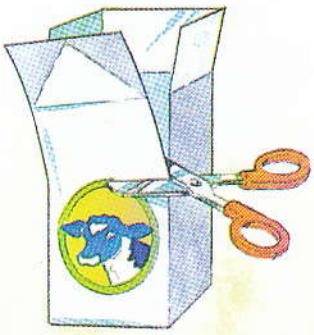
Put your pot on a saucer. When you water it, put the water in the saucer, not on the plant.

Herbs on your windowsill

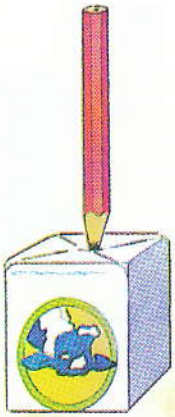
1. Buy some fresh herbs which are growing in a pot from a supermarket.



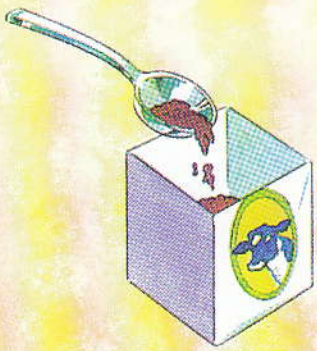
2. Wash out some empty half litre (one pint) milk cartons. You will need one for each herb.



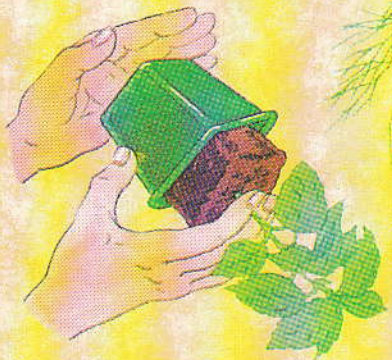
3. Dry the cartons. Snip halfway down one side. Then cut the top off all the way around.



4. Turn each carton over. Make a hole in the bottom with the point of a sharp pencil.



5. Put some stones into the bottom of each carton. Spoon in a little potting compost.

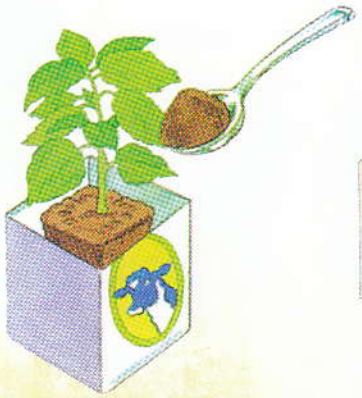


6. Take each herb out of its pot by tipping it over and tapping the bottom of the pot.

Chives

Dill

Grow them at any time of the year. They will grow for 4-8 weeks.



7. Fill the gap between the carton and the roots with compost. Press the top of the compost.

8. Cut a strip of paper long enough to go around and slightly wider than each carton.

9. Wrap one of the pieces of paper around each carton. Tape it at the back.

10. Put your herbs onto a tray and leave them on a windowsill. Keep the compost moist.

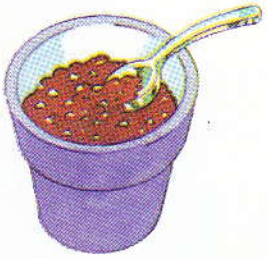
Parsley

Basil

Thyme

A sweet-smelling flower

Grow a hyacinth in soil



1. Use an old spoon to put potting compost into a pot. Don't fill it to the top.

2. Gently press the bulb in the middle, with the bud on top. Add more compost.

3. Stand the pot on a saucer. Carefully water around the bulb.

4. Put it in a cool, dark place for eight to ten weeks. Keep the compost damp.

5. When it has grown as high as your first finger, put it in a light, cool place.

6. When it grows a little taller, put it in a warm place. A flower will grow.

Grow a hyacinth in water

1. Cut two foil circles and lay them over a tumbler. Press the bulb on top.

2. Carefully press the foil down all around the sides of the tumbler.

3. Lift off the bulb. Make a 2.5cm (1in) slit in the middle of the foil.

4. Snip the slit to make a cross. Fill the tumbler with water, up to the foil.

5. Sit the bulb on top of the cross. Leave it in a cool, dark place.

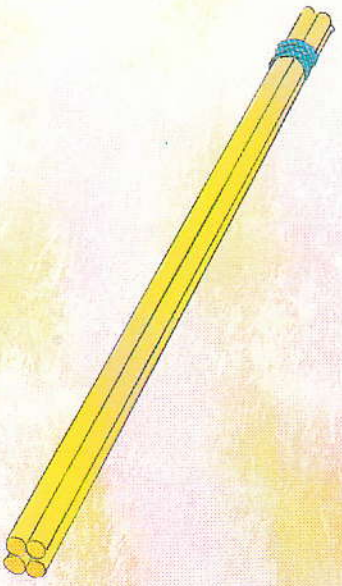
6. When the roots have grown long, move your bulb into a cool, light room.

Plant several bulbs together in a bowl, but don't let them touch.

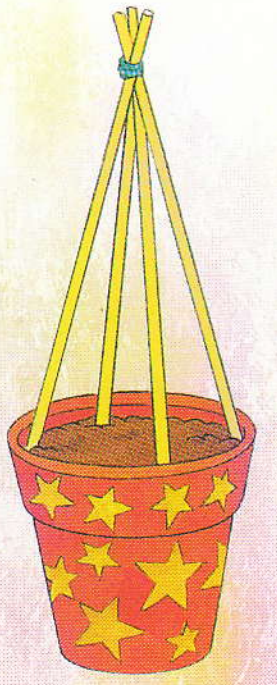
This is a special glass you can buy for growing a hyacinth.

An ivy tower

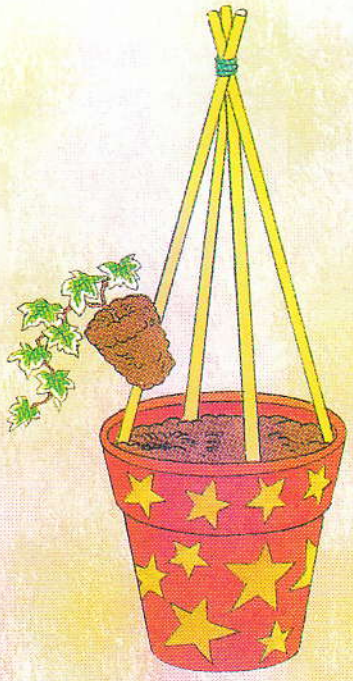
1. Put stones into a very large pot which has a hole in it. Fill it with potting compost.



2. Use an elastic band to fasten four short garden canes together near to one end, like this.



3. Spread out the canes. Push them well into the pot, with their ends nearly touching the sides.



4. Dig a small hole at the bottom of one of the canes. Put an ivy plant into the hole.

5. Add a little compost around the plant and press it down firmly with your knuckles.

6. Dig a hole at the bottom of the other three canes. Plant an ivy in each hole.

7. Hold the longest stem of each plant and twist it carefully around its cane. Water your plants.

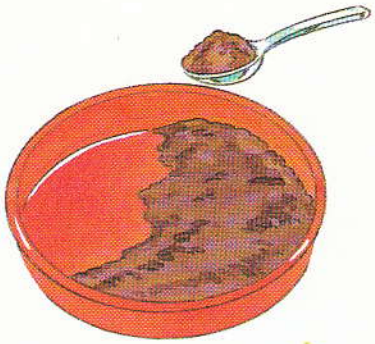
8. As the ivy grows, twist each stem around its cane every two or three days.

You can grow these at any time. They take 3-4 weeks.

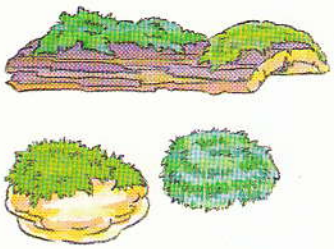
Paint your pot with acrylic paint and put lots of Christmas decorations on your ivy tower.

What shall I grow?

A moss garden



1. Put a thin layer of potting compost into the bottom of a shallow tray, with no holes in the bottom of it.



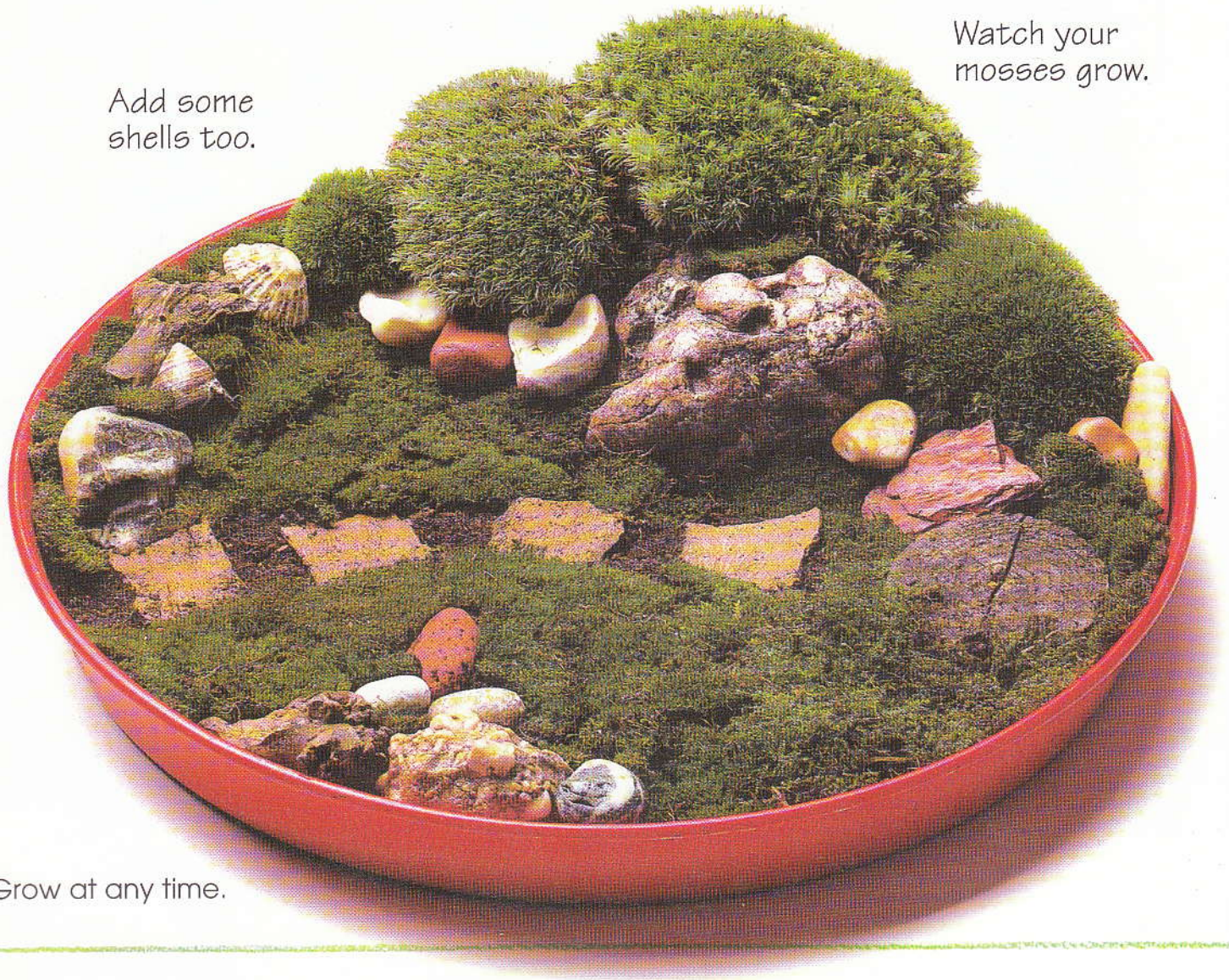
2. Hunt for some moss on lawns, walls and between paving slabs. Look on stones and pieces of bark too.

3. Dig up small pieces of moss and put them on your tray. Add mossy stones and pieces of bark.

4. Collect some rainwater if you can, but tap water will do, and spray or sprinkle the moss well every day.

Watch your mosses grow.

Add some shells too.



Grow at any time.

This edition first published in 2003 by Usborne Publishing Ltd., Usborne House, 83-85 Saffron Hill, London EC1N 8RT, England.www.usborne.com
Copyright © 2003, 1997 Usborne Publishing Ltd. The name Usborne and the devices ♀ ♛ are Trade Marks of Usborne Publishing Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher. Printed in Italy.

Usborne Activities

What shall I grow?

How about a green-haired creature, a giant sunflower or cress shapes which you can eat? These are just a few of the exciting ideas in this imaginative book for budding gardeners. Step-by-step instructions and bright photographs will instantly encourage you to try out your 'green fingers'.

This book has a new cover design.
www.usborne.com

Made with paper from a sustainable forest.

ISBN 0 7460 2715 X
J MAM/JASON/03
£4.99

9 780746 027158